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been expected, is crude and inadequate. To him they are simply a form of symbolism, and a contrivance to discipline human life, rather than a natural form of expression of religious ideas and principles. Ceremonies to him lack inherent validity and vitality, and of course are of but small importance, although not safely to be disregarded at the present time. The disregard of ceremonies led to that adulteration of Judaism with heathenism that developed into Christianity. There is need of ceremonies therefore to maintain the identity of the faith and to prevent alien admixtures. Moreover, Israel's life constitutes a model experience, and its national ceremonies take on a religious significance for the outside world. The abrogation of Sabbath and other changes of Christianity were the marks of external influence and customs and practices, grafted upon the Jewish stock, not to its advantage.

The book serves measurably to rebuke Christian missionary presumption and Jewish indifference and ignorance of our faith's inherent validity and worth. It is interestingly presented, and is worthy of consideration.

WILLIAMS'S 'CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES FOR JEWISH PEOPLE'

A Manual of Christian Evidences for Jewish People. By A. LUKYN WILLIAMS. Vol. I, with a preface by Dr. H. L. STRACK. Cambridge: W. HEFFER AND SONS, Limited. London: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL AND CO., Limited. 1911. pp. xvi + 249.

THIS book is an endeavour to refute Jewish objections to Christianity. The formulation of Jewish objections is that of Rabbi Isaac of Troki in the first part of his *Chizzuk Emunah*, written in Lithuania, about three and a half centuries ago. Naturally the point of view has changed somewhat from the seventeenth century to the twentieth, from Lithunia to England and America, from a Karaite Jew to that of even an orthodox Jew of modern times. For the Reform Jew other influences than this book are relied upon to work conversion. Prof. Strack, who lends his sanction to the work through a preface that he has

written for it, hints at other methods of refutation, more in line with modern scholarship, that might have been resorted to, but Mr. Williams is a faithful member of the Church of England, and abandons all other interpretations save that sanctioned in his confession. The tone of this disputation is kindly, and the attitude towards Jews well disposed. The point of view, however, is one hopelessly removed from the Jewish one. The book should have been more truly styled: 'Christian Evidences for Christian People'. It is a *petitio principii* from beginning to end. It takes for granted the truth of Christianity and the fact of the Messiahship of Jesus, from the point of view of the New Testament, and then undertakes to reconcile the statements in the Hebrew Scriptures to that supposed fact. The book from a Jewish point of view is entirely without force, since the very fundamental fact therein taken for granted is of course entirely denied.

The book has interest, however, to the Jew to note how a Christian from his own premises meets the difficulties of reconciling the Old with the New. The mere question of genealogy from David is confessedly most trying, and is only resolved by recourse to a supposed fiction of Jewish law that her husband's recognition of Mary's supernatural child conferred upon it the legal rights of his son.

The difficulties of the failure to realize Messianic conditions in the work and times of Jesus take up a considerable part of the work, and is met in two ways. The expression *בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים* connotes an indeterminate duration of time. 'We are not justified in saying that the fact that two or three thousand years may elapse between one act performed by Messiah and another is any hindrance to the two acts being described in Scripture as virtually concurrent' (p. 41).

Then another means of escape from any too difficult a situation is presented through the belief in the second advent. 'R. Isaac may not, as in the case at point, forget that we Christians hold, at least as strongly as Jews, that Messiah is yet to come. We believe that He came, but we believe also that He

is to come again.' So that as in Zech. 14. 4, 5. 'If the whole passage is to be understood in a literal sense, its fulfilment will take place at a late period in the Messianic time.' But if these signs can be thus postponed at will to the indefinite future, how can they be adduced as proof of the actual advent of Messiah?

This juggling with texts and adapting interpretations, now literal, now metaphorical, to fit the event, is extended to the even more important subjects of the Law, the Sabbath, the dietary laws. Is the Law abrogated? Not at all. Is it to be observed? By no means. The conception of law herein presented is puerile, it being based not upon a divine declaration of the true relation of things and persons, but upon a bald fiat that is devoid of all basis of reality. 'Jews, he says, suppose that the reason why we do not steal is because the eighth commandment says "Thou shalt not steal", but it is not so. The reason why we do not steal is not because we are told not to do so, but because stealing is contrary to the character of God, and to the first principle of love to God and man. To Christians the Law is abolished as a collection of laws, and this in all its parts, ceremonial and moral alike, in so far as they are laws.'

Why was the Sabbath abolished and Sunday accepted? The answer: 'Christians believe that something had happened upon it (Sunday) which was of overwhelming importance . . . they were determined to observe the day at all costs, even if its observance did displace that of the Sabbath'. Is this an excuse or a justification for a plain abrogation of the Sabbath?

To the Jewish mind the author's argument fails entirely to make intelligible the doctrine of the incarnation, and the objections of Rabbi Isaac to the dogma of the Trinity are by no means removed. The difference between the Jewish and the Christian doctrine of atonement is not clearly stated. The author seems to identify the former with suffering, and this leads him to the statement: 'Christians hold that the very Presence of God gave Himself up by taking human nature to be a self-sacrifice for human sin, and whatever may be the difficulties of this belief, it is at all events very different indeed from the belief that the suffering

of a man as such can at all atone for sin—yea, utterly opposed to it and contradictory’.

One of the favoured arguments against Judaism in favour of Christianity is the remarkable spread of the latter faith. In considering this the author is brought face to face with the growth of Mohammedanism. He disposes of this fact in the following note: ‘I am not forgetful of the fact that Mohammedanism has wrested certain lands in nearer Asia and northern Africa from Christianity, nor that it threatens to spread faster in middle Africa at the present moment. The demands that it makes upon the conscience and the life are so much lower that no surprise can be felt at its gaining a temporary victory in some quarters’. But if the Jew were to relate Judaism to Christianity on some such scale it would be attributed to Jewish arrogance.

The suffering of Israel and its long subordination and exile are used to cast obloquy upon faith and people. Yet it is admitted that this argument would have condemned Christianity and its founder at its origin. If it is held that its subsequent victory is its vindication, what shall be said of the survival of Judaism against all material powers, including Christianity, save as an assertion of its supreme spiritual power?

The Messianic texts in the Bible are considered in detail, and the interpretations are made to agree with the Christian doctrine and declarations; even the mistranslation of העלמה by ‘virgin’ (Isa. 7. 14) is adhered to. The book is provided with glossary and indices of general character and of Biblical and post-Biblical passages. Two other volumes in refutation of second and third parts of the *Chizzuk Emunah* are promised.

However well intentioned such efforts may be, their effect is the reverse of that which they purpose; they do not tend to bring men nearer to each other, but rather to widen the breach. The work may clear up for Jewish readers some points in Christian theology, but it signally fails to understand or refute the Jewish position. The undertaking to bring the two religions together must depend upon other forces than such as are represented in controversial dialectics. At best it can satisfy Christians.